

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (original) A sealing mechanism for a waste storage container, said waste storage container having a body, a lid and a storage film cartridge adapted to be positioned in said body, said cartridge having a continuous length of storage film therein, said sealing mechanism comprising:

an actuator operably connected to said lid and said cartridge, wherein actuation of said actuator opens said lid and seals said storage film.

2. (original) The sealing mechanism of claim 1, wherein a first actuation of said actuator opens said lid and a second actuation of said actuator seals said storage film.

3. (original) The sealing mechanism of claim 2, wherein said second actuation of said actuator closes said lid.

4. (original) The sealing mechanism of claim 1, wherein said actuator is operably connected to said cartridge by a series of linkages.

5. (original) The sealing mechanism of claim 1, wherein said body has a bottom, and wherein said actuator is positioned substantially near the bottom of said body.

6. (original) The sealing mechanism of claim 5, wherein said actuator protrudes from said body.

7. (original) The sealing mechanism of claim 1, wherein said actuator seals said storage film by rotating said cartridge.

8. (original) The sealing mechanism of claim 7, further comprising a clutch operably connected to said actuator and said cartridge, said clutch allowing said cartridge to rotate in only one direction.

9. (original) The sealing mechanism of claim 8, further comprising a rack gear operably connected to said actuator and said clutch, and a spring connected to said rack gear, wherein actuation of said actuator causes said rack gear to move in a first direction against the bias of said spring and release of said actuator causes said rack gear to move in a second direction under the bias of said spring to cause said clutch to rotate said cartridge.

10. (original) The sealing mechanism of claim 9, further comprising a locking mechanism operably connected to said spring, wherein said actuator locks said spring in a compressed position upon a first actuation and said actuator unlocks said spring upon a second actuator.

11. (original) The sealing mechanism of claim 5, wherein said actuator is pivotally connected to a first linkage and said first linkage is pivotally connected to a second linkage, said first linkage being operably connected to said lid to allow a user to open and close said lid and said second linkage being operably connected to said cartridge to allow a user to seal said storage film.

12. (withdrawn) A waste container, comprising:

a container body defining a waste bin, a lid and an opening

that provides access to the waste bin;

a support mounted to the container body adjacent the opening, the support having

a flange extending therefrom that is cylindrically configured for mounting a tubing cassette above the waste bin, wherein the support encloses less than all of the opening to the waste bin so that a waste packet can be passed through the opening and into the waste bin;

a tubing cassette mounted to the flange of the support; and

a tube sealing means for forming waste packets by twisting a flexible tubing that is dispensed from the tubing cassette; and

the lid portion enclosing an apparatus for controlling twisting the flexible tubing to form a tubing bag enclosing a waste packet.

13. (withdrawn) A waste container as recited in claim 12, farther comprising a waste bag mounted in the waste bin in which waste packets are sequentially collected.

14. (withdrawn) A waste container as recited in claim 12, wherein the flange is configured so that the tubing cassette is rotated by a motor to create a twist closure in the tubing when enclosing a waste packet.

15. (withdrawn) A waste container as recited in claim 14, wherein the tubing cassette is rotationally mounted to the flange, and further including a drive plate mounted to the tubing cassette, a drive gear drivingly engaged with the drive plate, and a motor mounted to the waste container lid and having an output shaft

Serial No.: 10/714,381
Art Unit: 3721

that rotates the drive gear when the motor is activated.

16. (withdrawn) A waste container as recited in claim 15, wherein a timing circuit activates the motor to rotate the tubing cassette for a predetermined amount of time or a predetermined number of times.

17. (withdrawn) A waste container as recited in claim 15, farther comprising a manually operated switch for activating the motor.

18. (withdrawn) A waste container as recited in claim 12, wherein the lid is hingedly attached to the container body.

19. (withdrawn) The waste container of claim 12, further comprising a plunging device for moving of the twist-closed waste packet downwardly into the bin to create a tubing-lined space for a deposit of another waste pack.

20. (withdrawn) The waste container of claim 12, further comprising:

a retention means for preventing rotation of a waste packet when the tubing cassette is rotated to create a twist in the flexible tubing; and

wherein the retention means also prevents the release of stored flexible tubing from the tubing cassette during the twisting rotation.

21. (withdrawn) A waste container as recited in claim 14, further including a drive plate mounted to the tubing cassette, a drive gear drivingly engaged with the drive plate, and a motor

Serial No.: 10/714,381
Art Unit: 3721

mounted to the composite waste container and having an output shaft that rotates the drive gear when the motor is activated.

22. (withdrawn) A waste container as recited in claim 21, wherein a timing circuit activates the motor to rotate the tubing cassette one of a predetermined amount of time or a predetermined number of times.

23. (withdrawn) A waste container, comprising:

a container body defining a waste bin and an opening that provides access to the waste bin;

a support mounted to the container body adjacent the opening, and configured to enclose less than all of the opening to the waste chamber so that waste can be passed through the opening and into the waste chamber;

a tubing cassette rotationally mounted to the support above the waste chamber; and

a retention means for preventing rotation of a waste packet when the tubing cassette is rotated to create a twist in the tubing; and

a plunging means for moving the twisted tubing downwardly to create new space for enclosing another waste packet.

24. (withdrawn) The waste container of claim 23, comprising further, a tubing gripping means to prevent release of tubing from the cassette during rotation for twist-closure of the waste content.

Serial No.: 10/714,381
Art Unit: 3721

25. (withdrawn) The waste container of claim 23, further comprising an apparatus for automated sequestering of individual waste packets deposited and enclosed in the flexible tubing by means of motor-powered twisting of the flexible tubing and moving the waste packet enclosure into the waste container bin.

26. (withdrawn) The waste container of claim 12, wherein the flexible tubing is equipped with adhesive means for enhanced stabilization of the twisted tubing.

27. (withdrawn) A waste disposal apparatus as recited in claim 12, wherein the waste packet deposit is a soiled diaper.

28. (withdrawn) A method for disposing of waste material, comprising:

providing a length of tubing having a first sealed portion of the tubing at a location along its length and an open end of the tubing;

inserting waste material through the open end of the tubing until it contacts the first sealed portion of the tubing to form a waste package;

retaining the waste package such that the waste package does not rotate in relation to the open end of the tubing;

rotating the open end of the tubing such that a twist is formed in the tubing between the open end of the tubing and the waste package; and

Serial No.: 10/714,381
Art Unit: 3721

sealing at least a portion of the twisted tubing to form a second sealed portion located above the waste packet enclosure.

29. (withdrawn) A method for disposing of waste material as recited in claim 28, further including the step of moving the length of tubing in a direction away from the open end of the tubing in preparation for the waste packet deposit step.

30. (withdrawn) A method for disposing of waste material as recited in claim 28, wherein the sealing step includes sealing at least a portion of the twisted tubing to form a second sealed portion by optionally electro-thermally heating or chemical adhesive application to at least a portion of the twisted tubing.

31. (withdrawn) A method for disposing of waste material as recited in claim 28, wherein the retaining step includes retaining the waste package by gripping the waste package enclosure, such that the waste packet does not rotate in relation to the open end of the tubing.

32. (withdrawn) A method for disposing of waste material as recited in claim 28, wherein the inserting step includes inserting or depositing a soiled diaper through the open end of the tubing until it contacts the first sealed portion of the tubing to form a waste package.

33. (withdrawn) A container for automated diaper disposal, comprising:

a container bin compartment for diaper deposits;

Serial No.: 10/714,381
Art Unit: 3721

a container top compartment enclosing an apparatus for automated sequestering of diapers in the container bin;

a combination of an automatically controlled motor-driven twisting operation which sequesters each deposited diaper individually in flexible tubing into a container bin compartment; and

an automatically controlled motor-driven plunging operation which moves the twist-locked diaper into the container and creates a predetermined length of the flexible tubing so as to provide space for the next following diaper deposit within the flexible tubing.

34-67. (Cancelled)